PERSUASION

published by
PERSUASION, INC.
260 west 86 street, n.y.c.

35¢

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distributed by the
Metropolitan Young Republican Club

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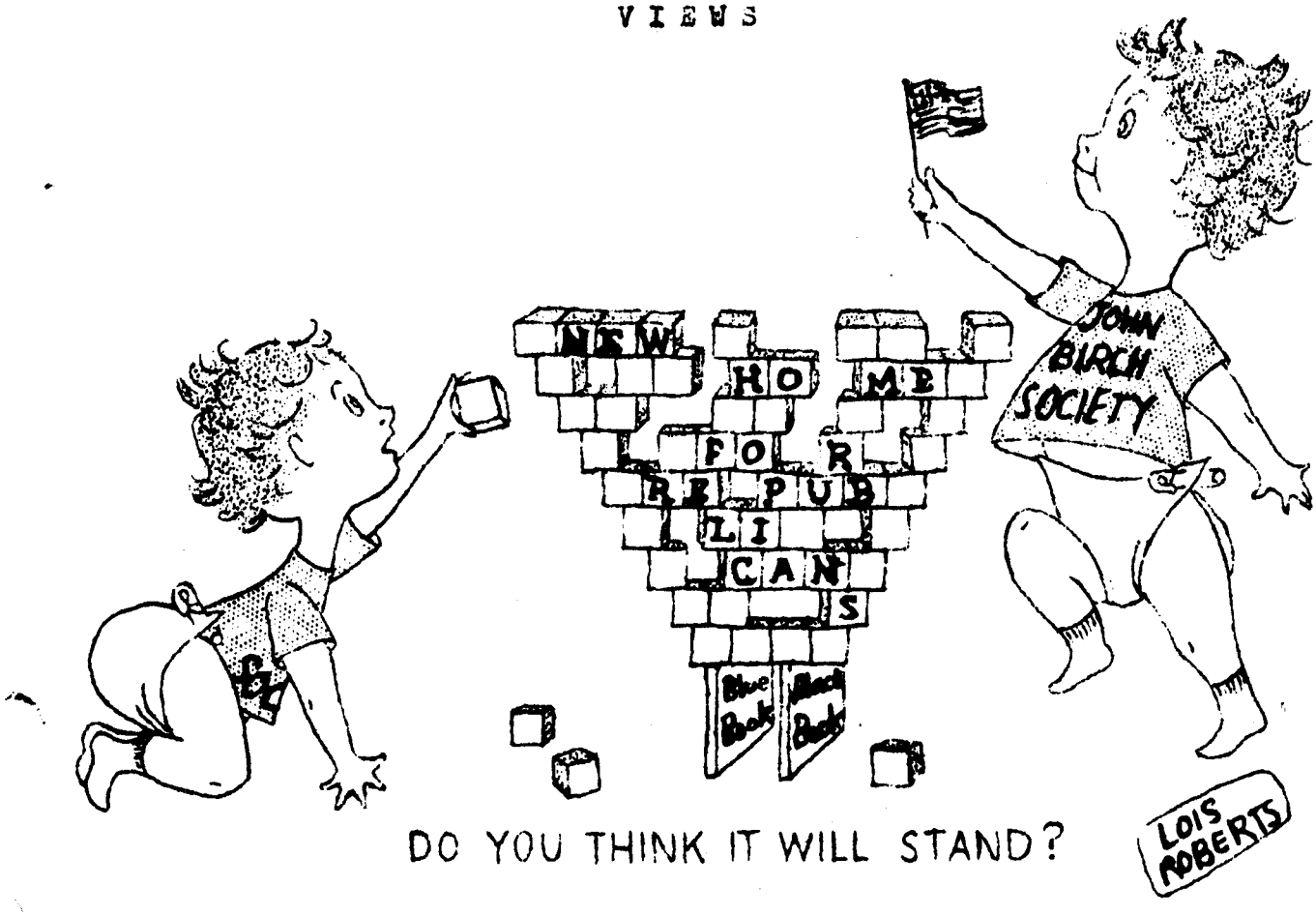
Volume II, No. 3 March, 1965

VIEWS



WHO AND WHAT IS THE JOHN BIRCH SOCIETY?

Early in 1961, newspapers, magazines, radio and TV brought The John Birch Society to the attention of the American people. The publicity was engendered by reports that Robert Welch, the Society's founder, had called ex-President Eisenhower "a dedicated, conscious agent of the Communist conspiracy." This he had done in a book-length letter entitled The Politician (also known as The Black Book), which was circulated privately but not proclaimed an official publication of the John Birch Society.

Since that time the Society has been the subject of much debate and controversy. Some have called it a menace, others ineffectual, still others have praised it as the only effective means available to fight communism.

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What is The John Birch Society?

Basically a political action group espousing "right-wing" views and dedicated to exposing and combating communism within the United States, The John Birch Society was founded (according to The Blue Book, the official operating manual of the Society) in Indianapolis in December 1958 by Robert Welch and eleven associates, most of whom today, by Welch's claim, are members of the Council, the top governing body of the Society. Welch has never identified the "eleven associates" more specifically than that. Welch named the Society after a U.S. Intelligence officer, John Birch, who was killed by Chinese Communists 10 days after World War II had ended.

The organizational mechanics of the Society as set up in The Blue Book are as follows: The Society functions through small local chapters, usually of from 10 to 20 people. Each has a Chapter Leader, appointed by headquarters in Belmont, Massachusetts, or appointed through officers of the Society, who have themselves been appointed by headquarters. The dues are a minimum of $24.00 per year for men and $12.00 per year for women. The Chapter Leaders report to a paid staff man with the title of Coordinator. The Blue Book states: "Above these Coordinators, in time, we shall have supervisors with the rank or title of Major Coordinators; and we shall further build the organizational framework from the bottom up, as made necessary by sufficient membership, in order to keep strict and careful control on what every chapter is doing. . ." It is not certain whether these Major Coordinators are now functioning.

The strength of the John Birch Society is unknown. One source (1962 Britannica Book of the Year) says: "Its membership was believed to be close to 60,000 and its annual income about $1,500,000." As noted in an article in the New York Times (June 23, 1964), a report filed with the office of the Massachusetts Attorney General, Edward W. Brooke, "showed the society had ended 1963 with a deficit of $210,953. The report, required by law, showed gross income of $1,043,656 and expenses of $1,169,997 in 1963. There also was a carry-over deficit of $34,612 from 1962."

The Society's Goals

One of the Society's goals, according to The Blue Book, is "to get a million members truly dedicated to the things in which we believe." In The Blue Book, written by Mr. Welch, it is argued that communism is a world-wide conspiracy to enslave mankind; that the great danger to America is not Soviet military strength but Soviet influence on the internal functioning of our government; that our government is controlled by Communists or their sympathizers (Welch uses the word "Comsymps" for these people); that our churches, schools, communication media and labor unions are rapidly being taken over by Communists. He sees big government as a threat and warns of the creeping socialism in our country, which he sees as the first step toward communism.

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The purpose of the Society is to combat these trends and stop the rising tide of collectivism in our country. The Society would like to see the end of the graduated income tax, withdrawal of the United States from the United Nations, and a return to the principles the Founding Fathers set up for our nation. It believes that a democracy is one of the worst of all forms of government, and believes in a constitutional republic. Because of this it strongly promotes the slogan, "This is a Republic, not a democracy; let's keep it that way."

Its long-range objective is summarized as "Less government, more responsibility, and a better world." It is never clearly stated in any of the Society's literature how it would achieve these objectives, and they have almost been dismissed by Mr. Welch as follows: "Since defeat of the Communist conspiracy overshadows all other objectives at the present time, our action program . . . [must concern itself with this.]" It is Welch's theory that the Communist conspiracy is responsible for everything he dislikes in the political scene. (Quotes taken from "A Brief Introduction to The John Birch Society," a speech made by Robert Welch in 1962.)

The Society's action program was described by Mr. Welch in the same speech as breaking down into 10 categories: "(1) Dissemination of Americanist books and pamphlets . . .;(2) increasing the circulation and readership of the best Americanist periodicals; (3) enlarging the audiences of Americanist commentators . . .; (4) making more effective use . . . of the weapon of letter writing; (5) organizing Americanist fronts for many different purposes, including the widespread use of petitions in some instances; (6) waking up the American people to the seriousness of our danger by exposing, wherever possible, the pro-Communist activities of Communist sympathizers; (7) making it more difficult for . . . pro-Communist speakers to appear . . . without at least some identification as to their slant and background; (8) making Americanist speakers available for audiences which are now, simply by default, at the mercy of pro-Communist lecturers; (9) supplying encouragement and renewed hope and determination to anti-Communist refugee groups throughout the country; and (10) carrying on an educational campaign on the political front. . . ."

To inform its members of the specific actions to be taken, the Society sends out a monthly Bulletin which suggests letter-writing campaigns and books to read and where to circulate them. It also endorses boycotting Communist goods, joining the PTA to be "watchdogs" over educational content, and various other projects which may help further the Society's goals.

The Society does not pledge allegiance to any political party. Its place in politics is as an educational group. But, "as individuals," its members do support candidates who they believe further their objectives. The Society has been thought to be interested in seizing political power in at least one state (California), but the New York Times (March 23, 1964) cited: "John Rousselot, . . . [an] ex-Congressman who is now Western Director of the Birch Society . . . [said that he] does not endorse

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or finance candidates. He repeatedly stressed the right-wing organization's status as an educational and patriotic society."

The society also publishes American Opinion, formerly known as One Man's Opinion, which is, as its title suggests, a magazine of political opinion. The magazine employs a spectrum of "conservative" writers which includes officials of The John Birch Society as well as such prominent people as Westbrook Pegler, Taylor Caldwell and Martin Dies.

Who is John Birch?

John Birch was a U.S. Intelligence officer during World War II. He had gone to China originally as a Baptist missionary, became a chaplain with Chennault's Flying Tigers and was inducted into the Army as a second lieutenant. He later became a captain. On a mission into China, he was killed by a Chinese Communist patrol. In The Blue Book, Welch states: "You will find that John Birch, a young fundamentalist Baptist preacher from Macon, Georgia, who did as much as any other one man, high or low, to win our war and the Chinese war against the Japanese in China, was murdered by the Chinese Communists at the first opportunity after the war because of the powerful resistance he would have been able to inspire against them. You will find, and I believe agree, that John Birch possessed in his own character all those noble traits and ideals which we should like to see become symbolized by The John Birch Society." It should be noted that the circumstances surrounding Birch's death are in dispute and this is Welch's version.

In a report and advertisement of the Society that appeared in Los Angeles (1962), it is stated: "His [Birch's] death was known and mourned all over China, for he had become a symbol of Christianity, of true brotherhood and humility, and of the goodness and strength of America. The cruel death of Captain Birch was a grim warning by the Red Chinese to all who would oppose their 20th century barbarism." It further states: "It is a testimony to the active Christian faith which John Birch preached that his story is today known and that the symbol of his life, which the Communists tried to stamp out, now guides the society that bears his name."

Who is Robert Welch?

According to his biography (written by Welch) in The Blue Book, Welch was born December 1, 1899, on a farm in North Carolina and raised as a Southern Baptist fundamentalist. "Educated at University of North Carolina (four years), United States Naval Academy (two years), Harvard Law School (two years), and school of hard knocks (about forty years)." He went to the James O. Welch Co., a successful candy manufacturing company run by his brother, and stayed until 1957 when he "gave up most of his business responsibilities--and most of his income--in order to devote practically all of his time and energy to the anti-Communist cause."

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The Role of Religion in The Birch Society

It is significant that both Birch and Welch are fundamentalists. This fact is one of the keys in understanding the actions, goals and reason-for-being of the John Birch Society. Fundamentalism in the United States is a movement in Protestantism that emphasizes, as fundamental to Christianity, an absolute belief in the literalness of the Scriptures and Biblical miracles. The secular ideals of fundamentalism are literalness, conscience, frugality, purity, industry and single-mindedness. The fundamentalist has a sentimental picture of what religion, family and society once represented and what they should again represent. It is the fundamentalist who seeks to legislate against drinking, gambling, divorce and many other "vices" which go against their moral beliefs.

Although Welch says in The Blue Book that he broke with "the intellectually restricting bonds of the unusually narrow Southern Baptist fundamentalism, in which I was raised, more than forty years ago," he has kept the ideals of fundamentalism, if not the religious aspects of it. Welch is a cultural result of fundamentalism. He states : "As a result of its [fundamentalism's] teachings, I saw myself as the inheritor of all the labor and sacrifice that had gone before me, by men who had used this God-given 'upward reach.' They had used it to provide the moral codes, the humane traditions, the accumulation of knowledge, and the material comforts, to make so fortunate an heir of so many ages. . . ."

He assures his followers that he respects all religious beliefs: "The true fundamentalists in our midst, whether Catholics, Protestants or Jews, are the moral salt of the earth. . . . And nothing I say now, nor any of the plans I outline tomorrow, is intended to question, weaken, or disturb any fundamentalist faith in the slightest; or to discount one iota its tremendous worth as a core of strength for all that we might hope to do."

He decries the fact that the numbers of fundamentalists are dwindling, and warns that "fully one-third of the services in at least the Protestant churches of America are helping that trend. For the ministers themselves are not true believers. . . ."

Welch sees this trend as ominous. "For not only is this loss of reinforcing faith in the cement of our morals a weakness in itself of immense significance, but like all of our weaknesses it has been pounced upon by the Communists, and used and made worse by them with great skill and determination for their own purposes."

To Welch, collectivism and communism are threats to his fundamentalist faith. In order to combat these threats he formed The John Birch Society. The combination of John Birch's fundamentalist faith and his death at the hands of Communists fit well into Welch's plans for an anti-Communist, fundamentalist political action group.

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A Methodology for Anti-Communism

Welch summoned his eleven associates in 1953 to Indianapolis and presented a two-day seminar on the dangers of communism and the importance of a return to faith. The main body of this seminar is what constitutes The Blue Book. This is where he introduced his theory of a Communist conspiracy. "Our immediate and most urgent anxiety, of course, is the threat of the Communist conspiracy." He admits that there is no easy solution: "Communism is not like a poison to which you simply find the antidote....There has been brilliant control and coordination, by central authority, of the efforts of millions of men....As a result of this forty years of cumulative effort, the conspiracy is now incredibly well organized. It is so well financed that it has billions of dollars annually just to spend on propaganda....This octopus is so large that its tentacles now reach into all of the legislative halls, all of the union labor meetings, a majority of the religious gatherings, and most of the schools of the whole world." (Italics his.)

Who is the "central authority"? Who has "so well financed" it? How does Welch justify this claim of a gigantic conspiracy? Welch relies heavily on historical data, the chain of the Communists' victories in the past forty-odd years. He points to the strategy of Lenin for world conquest--"Lenin died in 1924," writes Welch. "But before he died he had laid down for his followers a strategy of this conquest. It was, we should readily admit, brilliant, farseeing, realistic and majestically simple. It has been paraphrased and summarized as follows: 'First we will take East Europe. Next, the masses of Asia. Then we will circle that last bastion of capitalism, the United States of America. We shall not have to attack; it will fall like overripe fruit into our hand.' To make doubly clear what he meant and how firmly he meant it, with regard to taking Asia ahead of Western Europe, and then using Asia as a stepping stone and base from which to conquer Western Europe and the rest of the world, the strategy was also stated that, for the Communists, the road to Paris lay through Peking and Calcutta. Today, you can see how that road to Paris is leading back from Peking through Calcutta, Cairo, Damascus, Bagdad, and Algiers."

Thus armed with two points: 1) that the Communists are masters of strategy, and 2) that they have been consistently winning--Welch builds his conspiracy theory. How else can these events be explained?

And that is Welch's logic. He has no additional proof to support his theory--even if true. Instead he uses innuendo, name-calling, and downright equivocation about people and events. This is his substitute for objective evidence.

To further support his case, Welch publishes as American Opinion Scoreboard each year, which estimates the degree of Communist influence or control over the economic and political affairs of almost all of the nations of the world. These statistics have been "compiled from information and opinion supplied us by expert

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scholars and analysts on six continents." Each percentage has a latitude of 20 points. Thus the United States (in 1964) is 50-70 per cent controlled by Communist influence; Australia 20-40; West Germany 40-60; Hungary is a flat 100 per cent, as is Poland, Romania, and the Soviet Union. How these statistics are "measured" is vague. "The total extent of Communist control or influence over any country, however, is due to the impact of all Communist pressures, direct and indirect, visible and undercover, working together. In most cases, of course, that total cannot be measured with any exactness. But we believe the appraisals given below to be conservative. . . ."

What do these percentages mean? Or can they be taken to mean anything? Who are the "experts"? How is the "measuring" done? To "measure" something implies some standard, some technique of accuracy. None is offered.

Why is The John Birch Society Attacked?

One of the attacks that is repeatedly made by critics of the Society is that it is an authoritarian organization. The Society is set up as a monolithic body, structured from the top down. Mr. Welch states in The Blue Book, "A republican form of government or of organization has many attractions and advantages, under certain favorable conditions. But under less happy circumstances it lends itself too readily to infiltration, distortion and disruption. . . . The John Birch Society will operate under completely authoritative control at all levels. The fear of tyrannical oppression of individuals, and other arguments against the authoritative structure in the form of governments, have little bearing on the case of a voluntary association, where the authoritative power can be exercised and enforced only by persuasion." In a footnote to this section of The Blue Book, Mr. Welch adds that the monolithic structure of the Society has been attacked by "the Liberals." He emphasizes that this structure "is purely for the sake of efficiency, effectiveness, and steadfastness of purpose within the Society itself--from which anybody can resign, with our good will and good wishes, at the drop of a hat."

This is a good example of Mr. Welch's faculty for being ambiguous. In a paragraph which clearly refers to the policy-making of a voluntary group, why does he use the phrase "a republican form of government"? (Italics mine.) Similarly, in TV interviews he has allowed reporters to interrupt him after he has stated his dislike for "democracy" without insisting upon stating that the alternative he proposes is a republic, not a dictatorship.

The statement that Eisenhower is "a dedicated, conscious agent of the Communist conspiracy" is often attributed to the Birch Society, and used as an attack against them. This statement was made in The Politician, which is not an official publication of the Society but a private book-length letter written by Welch to some of his friends. Welch states in the Prologue to the book: "It is worth repeating that neither The John Birch Society nor its members have ever had any connection with

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The Politician in any way, except to be the victims of smears aimed at them because of it. The founders of the Society having disavowed the document, the COUNCIL of the Society long ago officially made it clear that this was a purely personal property and problem of my own, with which they wanted nothing whatsoever to do in any way." In other words, The John Birch Society did not call Eisenhower "a Communist"; Robert Welch did. The distinction is a fine one, but one would have to agree that there is a distinction. What can be criticized, and what is the similarity between th Society's official publication, The Blue Book, and Welch's private letter, The Politician, is Welch's approach to factual evidence.

The Society has been accused of anti-Semitism. They reject this charge emphatically as being completely unjustified. In all of the Society's literature which this reader could obtain, there is no hint of anti-Semitism. It is, of course, possible that some Society members could be so prejudiced, but it is not an official position of either Welch or The John Birch Society. In fact, Welch says in a booklet published by the Society entitled "The Neutralizers," that the charge against the Society is Communist-inspired to weaken, destroy and neutralize the Society. Even George Lincoln Rockwell, speaking of a planned rally in Washington on July 4, 1964, (New York Herald Tribune, June 27, 1964) said: "All the Right-wing groups except The John Birch Society will be there. The Birch Society won't have anything to do with us. They love Jews and we don't."

The Society has also been accused of being anti-Negro. None of its official policies support this accusation. The Society seems to be making an attempt to change its image, largely due to the efforts of John Rousselot, former Congressman from California, now Western Director and Public Relations Director of the Society. They have, according to an article in the New York Herald Tribune on July 13, 1964, set up an annual scholarship award of $1,000 for a "deserving Negro student, boy or girl, prepared to enter college."

Conclusion

Many of these attacks may be traced to the fact that Welch does seem to make himself misunderstood at times; others are unfair. But since the Society is a "monolith," and its policy starts at the top with Robert Welch, ultimately it will properly be judged by how incisive, appropriate and reasoned Mr. Welch's approach to politics is. In this respect, even to those who have sympathy with many of his aims, he does at times seem to undermine by his approach the very goal he seeks to reach--the awakening of the American people to the perils of our foreign and domestic policies.

--Elenore Boddy

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R E V I E W S

HOW NOT TO WRITE A BOOK

The Politician, by Robert Welch. Published privately, Belmont, Massachusetts, 1963.

The Politician is an examination of the career of Dwight D. Eisenhower in the light of the author's desire to show that Eisenhower's choices and decisions consistently aided the Communist cause. How does The Politician attempt to demonstrate this? Primarily by listing detail after detail of policy decisions, recognitions of foreign regimes, political appointments and associations and legislative proposals, all of which Eisenhower was either directly or indirectly involved with, and all of which, in the eyes of Mr. Welch, can best be explained by assuming that they were Communist-inspired.

But how does Mr. Welch attempt to prove that these decisions, recognitions, appointments, etc., with which Mr. Eisenhower was associated, were Communist-inspired? In several ways, all of which, unfortunately for Mr. Welch, can be shown to embody errors of argumentation or logic.

First of all, the over-all approach of the entire book is what one might call proof by enumeration. That is, there is no single incident in The Politician which Mr. Welch claims can only be explained by the supposition that Mr. Eisenhower is a Communist agent, although such is indeed the conclusion that Mr. Welch has come to. The book is full of disclaimers on this point: "It is true that a conclusion that Eisenhower was a willing tool of the Communists, based on that campaign alone, would have been utterly unjustified. It is true, of course, that there is nothing in this whole chapter which proves any such conclusion, and which cannot be explained in other ways. But it is also true that if his being a politician owned by the Communists is accepted as a working hypothesis, then everything in the whole chapter is completely covered, and made immediately intelligible, by that one explanation." (page 116) "You can find excuses and reasons for Eisenhower's conduct, or for various separate parts of it, by the dozen, if your credulity can stand the burden. But there is one simple, plain, straightforward reason which completely solves the whole problem, without leaving a single loophole." (page 46) "You can, of course, find specious and perhaps plausible reasons, other than a plain desire to help the Russian Communists, for Eisenhower's actions in this connection, as elsewhere. But to do so requires considerable seeking and a lot of sophistry." (page 29) "There are other possible explanations, of course. And this one measure of tentative evidence does not prove that his unceasing promotion was due to Communist support. But please note that such support would explain this particular development very neatly and completely. And it is the total of so many developments and events, which the same premise would explain equally well, that makes the mathematical probability in favor of this explanation a practical certainty--as I hope to show." (page 18)

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This last quotation expresses the core of the mistake in this approach. No matter how many times you add up zeroes, the result is still zero. Mr. Welch is claimin that he has shown that one incident in Eisenhower's life has many explanations, of which the explanation that Eisenhower is a Communist seems to him to be one. Perhaps, he says, it doesn't seem a likely explanation to you now, but wait until I show you ten thousand similar incidents. But if there is no reason to accept the accusation here, why should it be more impressive when it is repeated ten thousand times? Let me repeat--each individual incident reported by Mr. Welch is inconclusive--that is, he has never succeeded in making a logically necessary connection between Dwight D. Eisenhower and Communism. Mr. Welch may claim that that is in the very nature of the Communist conspiracy--it is secret, and hides all logically necessary connections.

But if the assertions that Mr. Welch is making are not logically necessary, then they are fallacious. There is no other choice. Let us see some of the ways that this is so.

In logic, a fallacy is a characteristic form of statement in which the conclusion does not follow from the premises. To begin with, the overall mistake which we began by discussing, the attempt to prove by enumeration, is what might be called the inductive fallacy. That is, it takes a list of correlations (These incidents all occurred, and Eisenhower was there) and claims that therefore some causal relationship exists between the two parts of each correlation. The famous example of this fallacy which is given in statistic books is that of the person who notices that crickets always chirp before it rains, and concludes from this that rainstorms are caused by the chirping of crickets. No list of correlations, no matter how long, shows cause. Cause is demonstrated by showing a logical necessity in each specific correlation in the list.

But most of the incidents which Mr. Welch cites as suspicious are of a particular form, a form which does not establish the existence of a necessary connection between Mr. Eisenhower and pro-Communist activities. The form is this: All Communists want such and such; Mr. Eisenhower wants such and such; therefore Mr. Eisenhower is a Communist. This is called in logic the fallacy of the <u>undistributed middle</u>. Because all A is B, and because C is B, it does not and cannot follow that C is A. The error is as gross as if one said, All fathers beat their children; my mother beat her children; therefore my mother is a father. Consider the nature of things that could be said: All Communists want to stay alive; Eisenhower wants to stay alive; therefore Eisenhower is a Communist. Then ask: Are the premises true? Yes. Does the conclusion therefore follow? It emphatically does not.

Another common fallacy is called the fallacy of <u>asserting the consequent</u>. In this, one says, All A is B, therefore all B is A. This is the fallacy Mr. Welch is guilty of when he tries to convict Mr. Eisenhower because he has been supported by people whom Mr. Welch finds dubious. What he is saying is: Communists support

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Eisenhower, therefore Eisenhower supports Communists. This same argument was used during the last presidential election, equally wrongly, to attempt to discredit Mr. Goldwater because he was supported by Mr. Welch.

What you might call a compound use of both these fallacies appears in the following example: "Somewhat less substantive but equally revealing was the well-publicized visit and homage Eisenhower paid to Professor John Dewey, the founder of 'progressive education' in this country, and the idol of every Communist and pink in the educational world." (page 101) Notice that the assumption is not only Communists like Dewey therefore Dewey likes Communists (A is B therefore B is A), but also Communists like Dewey; Eisenhower likes Dewey; therefore Eisenhower likes Communists (undistributed middle).

In order not to seem to take an example unfairly out of context, I will preface a citation of the fallacy of <u>equivocation</u> (using one word in two different ways) by a brief introduction. Mr. Welch is discussing the fact that in 1958 President Eisenhower sent a personal message which congratulated the Little Red Schoolhouse on the occasion of its twenty-fifth anniversary. Mr. Welch lists his objections to the school, its director and his wife, and asserts that 5 people who have been associated with the school (whom he names) have pro-Communist records. He then concludes his case with this splendid example of the fallacy of equivocation: "As the VFW's <u>Guardpost</u> pointed out, a congratulatory message from the President of the United States is a prize eagerly sought after by many institutions. But, to the best of our knowledge, no other private school in the country has ever received this kind of blessing from Eisenhower. He singled out one which carries the word 'red,' as a brazenly revealing part of its name, on which to bestow such a prize." (page 202)

There are other errors which Mr. Welch commits in <u>The Politician</u> which cannot be dignified by the name of fallacy, because they consist of substituting some other form of statement for any attempt at proof. Consider the following: "For while this is certainly not the place to go into a hundred pages, to show that George Marshall always conducted the American side of the war for the benefit of the Kremlin, to the very best of his ability, or into a thousand pages of other details and circumstances to show all he accomplished for the Kremlin in the years following the war, it is necessary to enter the conclusion to which those pages would lead. I defy <u>anybody</u>, who is not a Communist himself, to read all of the known facts about his career and not decide that since at least some time in the 1930's George Catlett Marshall has been a conscious, deliberate, dedicated agent of the Soviet conspiracy. There is, in my opinion, simply no escape from such overwhelming evidence." (page 15)

What is being done here? It is important to Mr. Welch in the development of his book to be able to show that from the start of his career, Dwight D. Eisenhower has had some sort of Communist association. But for many years Mr. Eisenhower was

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an army man, and therefore non-political. However, Mr. Welch has decided that General Marshall, who sponsored Eisenhower in his rise within the army, was a Communist himself, so the fact of his association with Eisenhower can be used against Eisenhower. How will he establish this vital link for the reader? By asserting that he has evidence at home, and that the reader is a Communist if he doesn't agree. This unhappy mixture of assertion and intimidation is not equally strong throughout the book, but assertion is used to provide key links in Mr. Welch's "case." "For many reasons and after a lot of study, I personally believe Dulles to be a Communist agent who has had one clearly defined role to play; namely, always to say the right things and always to do the wrong ones." (page 223) Or again, "The American people have not waked up to the clear evidence that Harry Hopkins, instead of being the fumbling half-mystical dogooder for which they took him, was one of the most successful Communist agents the Kremlin has ever found already planted in the American government, and then developed to supreme top-level usefulness." (pages 217-218)

And this is not the end. Mr. Welch also is willing to cite unidentified sources. "Once, in a small group, I asked a good friend of mine and prominent American, whose name at least is well known to every reader of this document but who has never held any political office, what he thought of Dulles. After a moment of hesitation he replied, so that everybody could hear: 'I think John Foster Dulles is a sanctimonious, psalm-singing hypocritical son of a bitch, and I know him very well." (page 224) But the citation of unidentified sources, also known as rumor, is an improper form of argumentation. The reader may notice, in the example just given, that the content of the rumor is an assertion, a form of error already discussed, and that the statement incidentally employs invective, and in the implication that if a "well known" person holds such a view so should the reader, it is also intimidatory.

These few examples are not intended to provide either an exhaustive list of the errors in logic and in argumentation which are committed in The Politician, or an evaluation of all of the incidents which Mr. Welch reports. They are intended to illustrate the kind of semi-plausible but unwarranted structure which can be erected by an author who is passionately attached to his thesis but has no conclusive evidence to present.

Am I saying that there are no incidents in the career of Dwight D. Eisenhower, as a general or as a policy-maker, with which I would disagree? Most emphatically I am not. There are many incidents cited by Mr. Welch which in my opinion represented disastrous mistakes, particularly in the field of foreign policy over the last thirty-odd years. Well then, the reader may say, perhaps the book has some value, even if it doesn't prove its central thesis. Although at least eleven out of the eighteen chapters in the book end with some form of assertion that the simplest explanation of Eisenhower's actions is that he is a conscious Communist

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sympathizer, Welch himself claims in the Prologue to the book: "I had specifically stated in the document itself that I had no quarrel with those who attributed the Communist-aiding actions of Eisenhower simply to political opportunism. There were some readers, indeed, who insisted and still insist that Eisenhower was simply too naive to know what he was doing; and that the whole incredible course of the history in which he had played so vital a part had been due to stupidity. And while many of those who read The Politician did come reluctantly to the same conclusion as my own, this personal opinion was still a minor part of the letter." (Prologue page xii) Well, the reader may say, hasn't Welch gathered together some good anti-Communist material anyway?

But a responsible argument stands or falls by its central thesis. If indeed after Welch has finished his 294 pages of argument, and compiled 75 pages of footnotes and read all the titles mentioned in his enormous bibliography--if after all of that intensive examination of his thesis Mr. Welch considered that he had not proved it, that it was a minor part of his book and a "personal opinion," on what grounds can he possibly justify making such an attack on the reputation of another human being? Does he by any chance think that the differences between a traitor and a man who is ill-advised or wrong are not important? Everything in this book was selected with respect to the central idea, and necessarily so. Mr. Welch couldn't, after all, reproduce all the information available about all the incidents he mentioned. But since his organization of this highly selected material can be shown to be of such a nature that nothing logically follows anything else, then even if all of his material is accurate as far as it goes (and remember that much of it is asserted without substantiation) it has no value. And because of the nature of the thesis, the book is worse than valueless. It is unjust. There are many excellent books that criticize various aspects of our public policy. There are many excellent books on the Communist conspiracy, and on the nature of Communist strategy and organization. Many of these excellent books are listed in Mr. Welch's extensive bibliography. He has added nothing to them.

But The Politician is an example of the rule that expending a great deal of energy is no guarantee of accomplishing anything. It attempts to substantiate its claim by cataloguing and footnoting a great deal of recent history, by interspersing these footnoted items in the catalogue with assertion and rumor, and by stringing the whole thing together in various logically untenable ways. I would like to make one thing clear--I am not defending Dwight D. Eisenhower from the charge of being either a witting or an unwitting agent of Communism. Under our concept of justice, I don't need to. He has not been responsibly accused.

--Joan Kennedy Taylor

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